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Director of Central Intelligence

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National Intelligence Daily

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15 August 1983

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NIGERIA-CHAD: Planned Diplomatic Initiative

Lagos is increasingly alarmed at the possibility of a Libyan victory in Chad and is attempting to assert its leadership in the region with a new initiative to resolve the conflict.

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Nigeria plans to send diplomatic missions to Washington, Paris, Tripoli, and Addis Ababa this week, hoping to arrange a cease-fire. It intends to offer to serve as a mediator between President Habre and the Chadian rebels. The US Embassy in Lagos believes that stopping Libyan leader Qadhafi remains the basic aim of Nigeria's policy on Chad.

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Nigerian President Shagari has publicly urged the implementation of the OAU accords signed in Lagos in 1979 that call for a cease-fire, the withdrawal of foreign troops, and a conference of all Chadian factions. The Nigerian Government has delivered a message to the US Embassy that rebukes the Libyans without naming them and criticizes French, Zairian, and US actions.

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Comment: President Shagari, following his sweeping election victory last week, now seems intent on focusing his attention on Chad, long a matter of major concern. Nigeria apparently hopes to use its position as black Africa's wealthiest and strongest democracy to develop support for a recent, similar OAU proposal that thus far has attracted little support.

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Qadhafi would be reluctant to engage in any negotiations that would imply recognition of Habre's government. Habre, who opposes negotiating with dissident leader Goukouni while Libyan troops are in Chad, presumably will regard Nigerian efforts with skepticism and consider them a dangerous diversion.

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Nigeria's Francophone neighbors, many of whom have security treaties with Paris, are alarmed by France's cautious response to the Chadian situation. These neighbors are concerned about Nigeria's pretensions to power in the region. They may fear that the new diplomatic efforts by Lagos could reflect a growth of Nigerian influence and power at the expense of the French and such regional leaders as Guinea's President Toure and Ivory Coast's President Houphouet-Boigny.

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MEXICO-NICARAGUA: Support for the Sandinistas

Recent changes in oil policy suggest President de la Madrid is prepared to use economic leverage to try to moderate Nicaraguan actions, but he nevertheless remains committed to the survival of the Sandinista regime.

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Ending 100-percent financing of oil sales to Managua is the President's first major adjustment of his predecessor's foreign policy. De la Madrid told US Embassy officials, however, that he "cannot cut Nicaragua off completely."

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According to the US Embassy, de la Madrid has privately encouraged Sandinista leaders to improve relations with their business sector and to act independently of Cuba and the USSR. He also has urged them to hold early elections. In contrast to most Central American leaders, he believes that Managua is now more open to meaningful multilateral negotiations.

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Comment: De la Madrid's moves probably reflect his concern over the potential for growing regional conflict and his desire to maintain cordial relations with the US. Because of domestic political considerations and his belief that social and economic inequities are at the root of Central American instability, however, he will continue to support Managua.

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The depth of his commitment to Nicaragua is shown by his frequent contact with Sandinista leaders and his public rejection of military and political intervention in Nicaragua. He has taken firm positions in the Contadora group to protect the Sandinistas and has continued economic aid.

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Mexican leaders are increasingly concerned about a "warlike irrationality" engulfing the region that they believe threatens the survival of the Sandinistas and raises the chances of violence spilling over into Mexico. This uneasiness will cause de la Madrid constantly to reevaluate the effectiveness of his policy to ensure Mexican stability while still trying to protect the Sandinistas and maintain Mexico City's regional influence.

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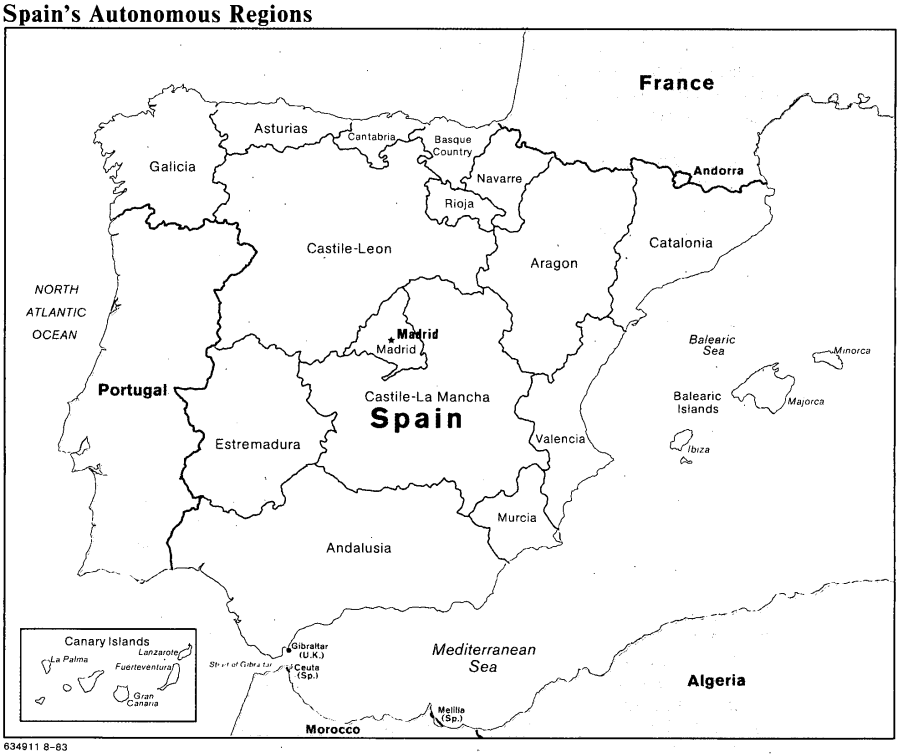
Spain's Autonomous Regions



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SPAIN: Autonomous Regions Win Legal Victory

The constitutional tribunal has decisively rejected a government-backed law designed to curb the powers of Spain's autonomous regions. [redacted] 25X1

The court has gutted the measure by declaring all or part of 14 of its 38 articles to be unconstitutional. The law was formulated by the now-defunct Union of the Democratic Center party and the Socialists partly to placate the military and the political right following the coup attempt in February 1981. It had been submitted to the court pending final approval by the parliament. [redacted] 25X1

The Basque and Catalan regional governments have maintained that the legislation was illegal. They say it would have negated authority granted them by the constitution and their autonomy statutes—a view unequivocally supported by the court. [redacted] 25X1

Comment: The government and all political parties have hastened to express support for the decision, which admits no appeal. In the short run the ruling is a setback for the Socialist Party—the sole surviving party to back the law—and a victory for regionalist forces. [redacted] 25X1

The long-term effect of the court's action, however, is to remove an obstacle to reconciliation between Madrid and the regions. This reduces the probability that the autonomy issue will create widespread political tensions. [redacted] 25X1

Many Socialists have had second thoughts about the law, and they may secretly welcome the decision. Many of the law's goals already have been achieved by other measures, and the remainder could be seen by the government as unnecessary and provocative in the currently more stable political environment. The Socialists may now find that the regional authorities in the Basque country and Catalonia, strengthened by the court's ruling, believe that they can afford to concede minor points to Madrid. [redacted] 25X1

The Socialist government now has to decide whether to abandon the law altogether, try to pass the articles upheld by the court, or develop a totally new approach to regulating Spain's autonomy system in collaboration with the regional parties. The last alternative would help to ease tensions further and contribute to a national consensus on the autonomy question. [redacted] 25X1

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USSR-US-CHAD: Soviet Demarche

The Soviet Embassy in Washington on Saturday made an oral demarche to the Department of State expressing concern over the US military buildup near Chad and Libya. The Soviets urged restraint and cautioned against using "internal events in Chad" to take military action "against other sovereign states, say, Libya." They said that a sharp increase in tension in Africa would have "extremely negative consequences" for the "entire international situation." The USSR expressed support for the OAU's efforts to negotiate a political settlement in Chad. [redacted] 25X1

Comment: The demarche apparently is in response to Libyan leader Qadhafi's repeated calls for Soviet support. It seems designed to put the Soviets on record as backing Tripoli without committing them to any action or sanctioning Libya's move into Chad. [redacted] 25X1
[redacted] 25X1

CHINA-USSR: Foreign Ministers To Meet

Foreign Minister Wu Xueqian has agreed to meet with Foreign Minister Gromyko during the UN General Assembly session this October, according to a Chinese diplomat in Moscow. Wu also is scheduled to visit Washington in October. Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Kapitsa plans to visit Beijing next month, just before the arrival of Secretary of Defense Weinberger. [redacted] 25X1

Comment: This will be the first meeting in 20 years between the Chinese and Soviet Foreign Ministers at a General Assembly session. China seems intent on maintaining the appearance of balance in its diplomatic contacts with the USSR and the US for whatever tactical advantages it can gain. [redacted] 25X1

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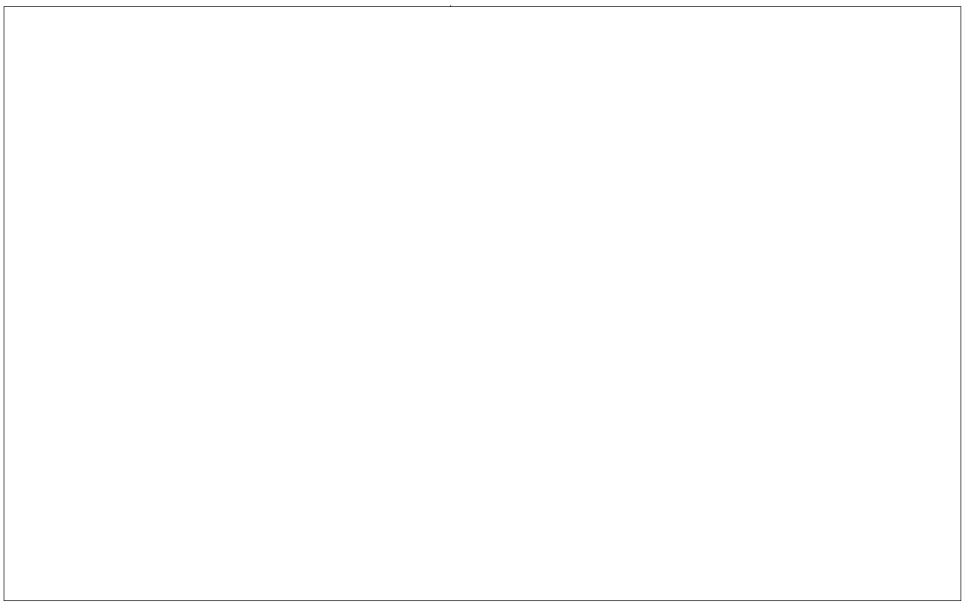

KUWAIT-SAUDI ARABIA-IRAQ: Additional Aid

The US Embassy in Kuwait reports that Kuwait and Saudi Arabia will, on Iraq's behalf, sell some 248,000 barrels per day of crude oil from the Neutral Zone, a jointly administered area whose oil production is shared equally by the two countries. Earlier information had indicated that only some 74,400 barrels per day from Kuwait's share would be supplied. The Arabian Oil Company began marketing the crude for Iraq earlier this month.

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Comment: If the entire allotment from the Neutral Zone is in addition to the Saudi aid, as appears likely, Iraq will gain an additional $2.6 billion over the next year. The income would provide the Iraqis significant balance-of-payments relief, but it would not be enough to spare them from making additional cuts in imports this year.

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Special Analysis

USSR-CHINA: Buildup Along Border Continues

The limited improvement in the relationship between the Soviets and the Chinese during the past year evidently has not brought the two sides any closer on the issues of troop withdrawal and the status of Soviet forces in Mongolia. It also does not appear to have had any impact on Soviet military planning. The Soviets have continued to build their forces steadily along the Sino-Soviet border and to provide them more modern weapons. Recent Soviet investment in new garrisons for combat units and in new logistic facilities suggests that the USSR is planning to continue this gradual buildup. [redacted] 25X1

One-fourth of all Soviet Ground Force personnel—nearly 500,000 troops—is stationed opposite China. Ground units in the eastern USSR include 48 active divisions and an independent Army corps, and they are supported by well over 2,000 aircraft, including planes and helicopters, and over 100,000 airmen. Expenditures by the Soviets on their forces opposite China, however, total only slightly more than 10 percent of the defense budget. [redacted] 25X1

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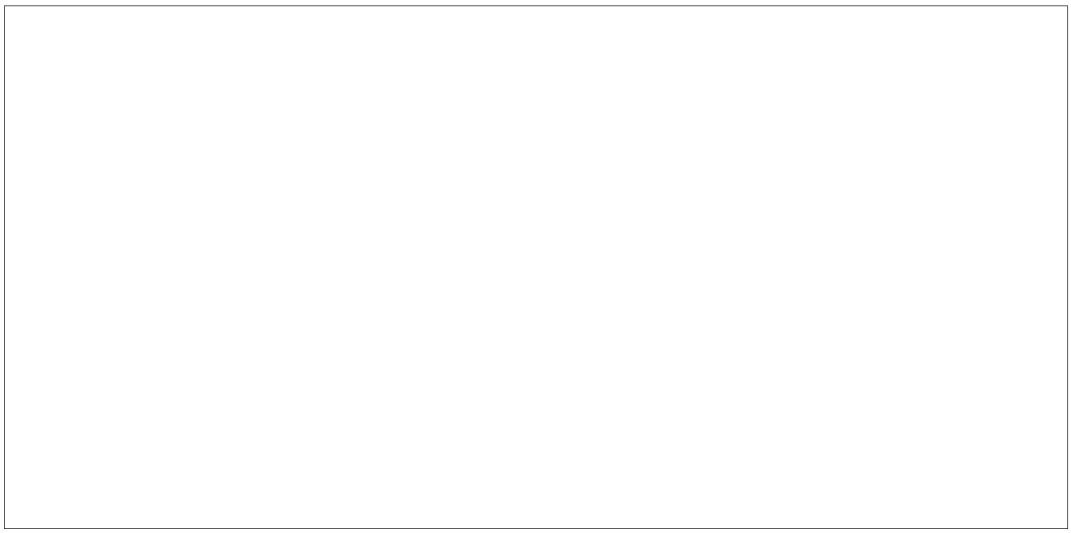

Weapon Improvements

The pace of modernization has been slower than in forces opposite NATO, but the Soviets have continued gradually to replace older weapons with newer, more capable models in all their forces on the border with China.

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In the Air Forces, the Soviets have replaced many MIG-21 fighters with MIG-23s and older ground attack aircraft with MIG-27s and SU-17s. Moreover, about half of the Soviet divisions opposite China now have helicopter support squadrons.

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Prospects

Without fundamental progress in the talks with the Chinese and an evident change in China's buildup across the border, the Soviets are likely to continue their buildup. They probably will add about one low-strength division per year to their forces in the eastern USSR at least through 1990, following plans that presumably predate the talks. They also will modernize the equipment of these forces at the current deliberate pace.

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Soviet military planners, in any event, would be likely to resist reducing forces opposite China or slowing the improvement programs there. They probably recognize that since 1979 the Chinese have increased their tanks, armored personnel carriers, and aircraft in the border regions by some 30 percent, and that they have formed new units and strengthened their fortifications along probable invasion routes.

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Soviet planners are likely to believe that, if the USSR continues its current efforts, its qualitative superiority in weaponry will offset China's numerical superiority in manpower. This would enable Moscow to continue dealing with China from a position of strength.

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The talks reportedly will resume in Beijing in October, and they may eventually lead to an agreement to at least discuss mutual force reductions. Neither side, however, expects a breakthrough in the near future

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Each side seems determined to wait for the other to make the first move toward any compromise. The Soviets, for example, are well aware that China is especially sensitive about their forces in Mongolia. They nonetheless continue to improve them.

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The USSR and China, would, in any event, face several problems in working out an agreement on across-the-board troop cuts. These include the difficulty of comparing the Soviet forces, which include divisions well equipped with modern arms, with more poorly equipped but more heavily manned Chinese forces.

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